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My Leisure Moments



Fred Goldsmith Walker.

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Sincerely
Fred Goldsmith Walker.

MY LEISURE MOMENTS.

BY
FRED GOLDSMITH WALKER.

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To my Friends:

WHO BY THEIR KIND WORDS HAVE
ENCOURAGED ME IN MY WORK, I CHEERFULLY DEDICATE

THIS BOOK OF POEMS.

FRED GOLDSMITH WALKER.

PREFACE.



N choosing a title for this, my first book of poems, the thought came to me, Why not call it "My Leisure Moments?" and the more I reflected upon it, the more appropriate did the name appear, for the larger part of the verses were written from thoughts which came to me when my mind was free from the cares of daily life. A young author must unavoidably meet with a great deal of discouragement in bringing forth his first work. It is perfectly natural for him to endeavor to produce such, as worthy of his best thoughts. In issuing this volume, I feel a natural diffidence, being conscious of the fact, that it is no easy task to produce an initial book of poetry which shall go through the ordeal of criticism and still leave a ray of merit for the author. I make no apology for the fervor of youth, or lack of experience, but place the book in the hands of my friends, hoping to profit by their just criticism. The contents of this volume have not been chosen with discrimination from my manuscript; neither are they studied effects, nor have they been through the routine of careful preparation. They represent my thoughts with simplicity, for simplicity should always be the aim of the youthful author. The public is beginning to appreciate simple things more and more every day. Why do not John Howard Payne's "Home, Sweet Home," or Samuel Wordsworth's "Old Oaken Bucket" lose their force and sweetness with our people? Because their natural simplicity touches the public heart.

The poems in this book have appeared from time to time in the press of Essex County, and I have taken them in their primitive state and given them a nestling place in this book. The bird-note of poetry is no doubt missing in my attempts, but one rarely reaches the tone *par excellence* in early writing. To write well in verse does not necessarily depend upon study. The *true* poet always sings from

"the heart and soul," and it is by the help of these, that he is enabled to sweetly portray his ideas of life and the beauties of nature. A literary friend of mine writes:—"The word poetry has a rare significance. It is suggestive of a subtle unseen force which involuntarily moves us to a higher conception of life and immortality. It has been applied to designate the artistic productions of the imagination, expressed in language. But not alone does poetry find expression in the uttered words of any known tongue, ancient or modern, nor is it confined to rhyme or measured sentences. True poetry is an outpouring of the heart and soul, an intuitive awakening which strikes the chord of a gamut far above our common being." I know of no better description of poetry than the words quoted. Poetry has done a great deal of good in this world for humanity. There is an indescribable something about it, that seems to touch the hearts of the people with a success unknown to prose. The memories of Moore, Bryant, Longfellow and Poe will never die, for through their songs the living hold communion with the dead. A number of my poems relate to the sea. I have always been an admirer of the ocean, and its vastness, fury and tranquillity have been a wonder to me. There is something about it unrevealed; a mystery wrapped with uncertainty, the reality of which will never be known until the sun bursts into glory on the eternal morning. In the ocean's depths sleep many we once knew in our midst, but now lie at rest in "God's Acre" among the coral groves.

"Far in the depths there lies an unknown city,
O'er which the waves are rolling to and fro',
No mourners speak their tender words of pity,
For those who sleep forgotten there below."

I trust that in this collection, some may find comfort and pleasure, and that "My Leisure Moments" will be welcomed in quiet moments of others, and happily shared.

FRED GOLDSMITH WALKER.

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MY LEISURE MOMENTS.

The River.

Gentle river ! slowly winding
On your course so soft and mild,
Stealing through the vales and meadows,
And the forests grand and wild,

Like a gleam of light you wander,
On your way in silent stealth,
Purity is your sweet virtue,—
'Tis your great and noblest wealth !

In thy waters clear and sparkling,
Shadows of the woodlands lie,
Blending with the blue of Heaven—
True reflection of the sky.

With the blending of these colors
Radiant on thy peaceful breast,
Gentle river ! seems thou glidest
Through a land of love and rest.

Life is gliding like a river
Through the fields of earthly care,
And the joys, the hopes and sorrows,
Seem to gather everywhere.

Stream of life ! could but the shadows
Of grand thoughts reflect in thee,
I should bless your name forever—
You would bless the world and me !

The Ship Sooloo.

Can it be the old Ship Sooloo
Moving slowly up the stream?
That once proud and noble vessel,—
Is it truth or but a dream?

In that dark and cumbrous figure,
Doth a trace of her remain?
Is she still in active service
In the search for wealth and gain?

What a change ! She comes dismasted,
All her former beauties gone,
In the role of dingy coal-barge,
Blackened, aged, and forlorn.

Many years she ploughed all oceans,
Spreading Salem's name abroad,
But those days of joy are over,
She has reaped her great reward.

Grand old Sooloo ! 'Tis a pity
That your former worth has died ;
Never more in matchless beauty
Can you stem the ocean's tide !

Never more, like foaming charger
On the bloody battle-ground,
Can you rear and plunge in triumph,
With a grandeur, great, profound !

All the distant seas you traversed,
They will miss thy stalwart form
And the gentle, peaceful trade-winds,
Or the howling, raging storm !

They will miss thy noble presence,
Faithful rover of the sea,
But thy name shall live forever,—
Dwell within our memory !

Ne'er again shall tropic breezes
Speed you on o'er Fortune's tide ;
You've returned a gray old pilgrim,
To our coast e'er to abide !

Though a coal-barge, still the laurel
Decks thy strong and shapely prow ;
Salem holds you true in reverence,
You are worthy, worthy now !

Great thy work—awhile you'll linger,
Having fallen but with age ;
You will act your part as ever,
Firm on labor's broadened stage !

Good old Sooloo ! Glad we welcome
Thy return from foreign lands,
And the harbor at your coming,
Greets thee with extended hands !

It well knows thy life is ebbing,
You come home a pilgrim gray,
Having braved the mighty billows,
Having acted well thy day !

Life's hard battle you've fought nobly,
Won your spurs o'er wind and wave,
But it's sad to see thy bondage,
Bondage like a dusky slave !

Still you live though strongly fettered
With the chains of Age and Time,
Never more shall winds of Heaven
Speed you on from clime to clime !

Fare thee well, old honored Sooloo !
Ever through the years to be,
We shall praise thy well-earned glories,
Salem will remember thee !

The Unknown City.

Far in the depths there lies an unknown city,
O'er which the seas are moving to and fro ;
No mourners speak their tender words of pity
For those who sleep forgotten there below.

Peaceful they rest upon the soft sands golden,
Gently the waves are murmuring the dirge,
That same old song, which in the good days olden,
Sung for the lost—the victims of the surge.

Far in the depths, who knows that city sleeping?
What hand unseen builds coral o'er the dead?
What spirit kind dwells there, forever keeping
Watch o'er the forms with silent, measured tread?

There is no stone inscribed to tell the story,
There are no trees to whisper from above ;
Naught but the waves, which, rolling in their glory,
Sound for the dead a litany of love.

Though far unseen is God's sea-buried acre,
We of the earth should love that city well.
Sweetly it sleeps, protected by its Maker,
There, mournful seas beat forth a lasting knell.

The Beautiful River.

We have heard of a beautiful river,
Where the souls of the dying glide,
To be borne to the fair gates of Heaven,
On the gentle, silvery tide.

We have heard of the old faithful boatman,
Who guides the soul home to its rest,
To meet with its God and the Angels,
To dwell in the land of the blest.

Mortal eyes have ne'er gazed on that river,
Where the souls of the dying float o'er,
To be welcomed by choirs of Angels,
On the banks of the Heavenly Shore.

Yes, that river will flow on forever
With its waters so peaceful and clear,
For the Kingdom of God lieth yonder,
The home of the sanctified, dear.

Life's Hopes.

When alone, I often wonder
What the aim of life should be,
Whether for this world's fruition,
Or its real nobility.

And these thoughts float on before me,
Spectral visions in my mind ;
But to their intended meaning,
I am often weakly blind.

Life I sometimes think is happy,
With its sky a constant blue ;
Darkened shadows find no presence
In the conscience clear and true.

Living seems a happy dreamland,
Kindness floats on crystal tide,
Thoughts are flowers in Life's garden,
Former woes have fled and died.

Then there come unlooked-for changes :
Happiness has taken wings,
Trouble, hand in hand with sorrow,
To the heart but discord brings.

Friends pass on to that hereafter,
Where there is eternal day ;
Could but we go on to join them,—
We are destined—we must stay.

Can we live in true contentment,
Sadness clinging to the soul ?
Yes, but look with hope to Heaven,
It is the redeeming goal.

Losing loved ones doth bring sadness ;
Thoughts of Heaven bringeth cheer,
Life will find a great transition
O'er that silent river clear.

There the soul will float in silence,
'Till it touches fairer shore,
Where they live who caused bereavement,
Those who passed beyond before.

It will see our parted loved ones
In their spotless robes of white,
Singing sweet the joys of Heaven,
To the peaceful soul's delight.

But as we on earth must linger,
Many years though it may be,
Blessed Heaven of peace,—contentment,
We shall build our hopes on thee !

Away with the City!

Away with the city ! Away with the noise !
The country's the place dear to me ;
And our old-fashioned cot, which can never be bought
By the wealth of the pearls in the sea.

'Twas there I was born 'mid rural delights,
Fresh air and a clear flowing spring ;
Thus the joys of the farm made a heart-easing balm,
And pleasure the sweetest did bring.

My mother was kind ; her teaching was wise ;
She taught me the way to live right ;
She had God for her guide, till the time when she died,
And faded away from my sight.

They laid her dear form one morning in May,
At rest in the lot near the lake ;
Where Nature's sweet choirs harped their evening lyres,
It seemed, for her memory's sake.

Those days are now o'er ; they never will smile
Their joy and contentment on me.
I am miles from that place of beauty and grace,—
The city is all that I see.

But once in a while, I love to go back
And visit the folks on the farm.
Though mother's not there, the scenes dear and fair
Ne'er lose their sweetness and charm.

This love will ne'er die, but live in my heart
As verdant as fair evergreen ;
And e'er will entwine, like the quaint ivy vine,
Around the fond thoughts of each scene.

The Lost Way.

One darkened night, I found myself afar
From home or friend, in forest deep and wild.
Above me gleamed with beauty, Northern Star ;
But I was lost, just as a little child
Who strays from home and wanders through the fields,
To wonder o'er the flowers nature yields.

I felt child-like within the forest grand,
No winding path to guide me on my way,
And, in my mind, yes, many schemes I planned,
But they proved fruitless, and I had to stay
Alone amongst the monarchs of the wood,
Which there for years firm sentinels had stood.

A silence reigned, save whispering of the trees,
And silvery tone of brooklet flowing by,
Upon my brow I felt the soft, cool breeze,
And watched the stars of Heaven in the sky.
Still I was lost ; the road was far from view,
But hope remained and gave me courage new.

I turned by chance, when through an opening wide
I saw a light, as if a home was there.
My heart beat fast ; with anxious fear I sighed,
But pushed ahead, and left my great despair.
Ah ! Then I thought of how some spirit kind
Had led me on, my long lost way to find.

I reached the house and, looking through the door,
My eyes beheld a woman bending low ;
She was in prayer, I heard her voice implore

For God to lead her as she ought to go,
And bless her boy who left a mother's care,
To wander through the world — I wondered where.

I never knocked, but started on my way
Upon the road the light had shown to me ;
I left her there with God, alone to pray,
For from His heart comes truest sympathy.
I was not lost, as her poor, darling boy,
My way was found with thankfulness and joy.

Christmas Poem.

Send forth, sweet bells, thy gladsome peals ;
Send forth the tale of long ago !
And carry to the ears of men
The happy news so dear to know.
Ring forth, sweet bells, and with accord
Sound the praise of Christ our Lord !

Ring ! Tell the world by thy sweet tones,
The memories of that distant day,
How, in a manger, old and worn,
Was born the Christ, our Hope, our Stay ;
The Christ who leads men on to be
Examples of morality.

And by thy peals, the world reviews
The dear thoughts of that Day afar,
Of how the shepherds found their Lord,—
Were guided by the Eastern Star ;
Which, in its brightness, guided them
To see the Babe at Bethlehem.

Oh ! may we all throughout our life,
Be guided by some shining light !
That we may shape a noble course,
To live and act forever right.
For being led in worthy ways,
We give to Christ the warmest praise.

Sweet Christmas Day ! Sweet Day of Love !
We reverence thy hallowed name,
For on this joyous, happy morn,
The Lord for our redemption came.
He came and died, that men could give
Their hearts to Him, and nobly live.

To a Friend.

I am lonely, and my hours
Seem like drooping, fading flowers ;
You are living far from me —
Could thy dear face I but see !

As the days go drifting by me,
Oft I wish that thou wert nigh me ;
But in vain for thee I gaze —
Lonely are my present days !

I can hear no sweet voice cheerful ;
Oft my eyes are moist and tearful ;
Could you know my saddened state,
You'd return and heal my fate.

Still I'll live and look with pleasure
For the coming of my treasure ;
When my sad, unhappy hours,
Will bloom forth as spring-time flowers.

Companionship.

Mother, what a road we've travelled,
In this long life, side by side,
Whose bright years have faded from us,
Borne upon a distant tide.

But, thank God ! the end is sweeter,
Sweeter than the loveliest rose ;
Though we've lived in constant gladness,
We shall share a happier close.

Mother, when I look upon you,
And your hair of silvery gray,
I can well remember how we
Met upon that old spring day.

You were roaming in the meadows,
Just above your father's farm,
And the very air about you
Seemed to breathe a holier balm.

All through life this perfect fragrance,
Made my life a matchless joy,
But I love you now as dearly,
I am still your farmer boy.

And what years remain to live in,
May we both feel gay and young,
Oh ! as cheerful as the robins,
Which to us in past days sung.

For the time will come with silence,
When this life will be no more,
We shall be God's chosen angels,
Dwelling on a better shore.

Death.

It comes in the day, it comes in the night,
It comes at all times unknown,
And moves as a spirit unseen to sight ;
Summons the sad, the gay and bright,
To a place of a nobler tone.

It summons the rich, it summons the poor,
To the mercy-seat of the Lord ;
And enters at will through the humblest door,
Or the sculptured arch, where it oft before
Has spoken the bidding word.

It steadily moves, this spirit, Death,
And will go and come where it will ;
For the beating heart, and the gentle breath
Will cease to be when the spirit saith
"God bids that thou now be still."

The Obelisk.

On Egypt's shore three thousand years thou stood,
And watched the centuries come and go ;
Beheld the pomp and grandeur of those days,
Drift far away, an idle, fleeting show.

Three thousand years thou watched the grand decay
Of dynasties and architectural wealth,
And saw the thief of Time's destroying hand
Steal o'er the Pharoah's land with cunning stealth !

How grand the change ! But now it seems a dream
That thou once stood upon Egyptian plain ;
And on thy sides in carvings deep inlaid,
The record of those empty days remain !

Those empty days, when Egypt humbly bowed
With forced obeisance to a Roman will ;
Are those days lost ? Or do they yet live on ?
For progress are they true or worthless still ?

Birthday Poem.

O faithful servant ! thou hast acted well
Thy part upon the broadened stage of life ;
Thy noble deeds will ever live to tell
The story of that long and irksome strife !

For many years thy work has been for men,
To help and lead them in an honored way,
And Ipswich knows how true to God you've been,
Thy loyal zeal and readiness to pray !

And Temperance in thee has found a friend,
A friend who consecrates his life for her,
To all down-trod, a hand you'll glad extend,
To cheer them on—live noble as it were !

Yes, fifty-two long years of life you've passed,
With record honest, faithful, clean and true,
May you live on the noble life thou hast,
And forge ahead with kindest thoughts in view !

And when thy mission in this world is o'er,
A Heaven awaits, that blessed home above,
Where God's disciples throng the Sacred Shore,
Where Jesus reigns with mercy and with love !

And so to-night we friends assemble here
To pay our tribute to thy honored name,
And may your life, replete with memories dear,
Develop grand—add lustre to thy fame !

God-speed, true friend ! Thy work has well been done,
And in itself doth show a faithful life
'Gainst trials of earth, a victory you've won,
And conquered o'er its hardships and its strife !

The Violet.

Once more the fields and hills rejoice
To feel the sun shine warm again,
And Nature lifts her thankful voice,
To speak her grateful, glad Amen.

And what were still through Winter's sleep —
The flowery inmates of the wood,
From every nook their young heads peep,
To gaze upon the solitude.

The lovely violet, sweet and blue,
Appears beside the bubbling spring,
To Nature it is ever true,
And purity doth always bring.

'Tis strange that children love it best
To pluck and deck some little vase,
I love it better than the rest,
This queen of God's fair petalled race.

In it I see thoughts kind and dear,
In it I see love freely given,
Thank God it cometh every year,
And brings a tender blue of Heaven.

The Faithful Mourner.

I saw the funeral train move on,
Until it reached the grave,
Wherein they buried 'neath the earth,
The form of one so brave.

The eyes of all were filled with tears,
Because they'd put to rest
A noble man, a man of God,
With Heavenly virtues blessed.

I saw the earth thrown back to place,
I saw the new-made mound,
'Twas all to tell the passer-by
That it was hallowed ground.

The mourners wandered to their homes,
And all that lingered by,
Was but the sleeper's faithful dog,
Which on the grave did lie.

He seemed so human, as he lay
With brown eyes soft and mild,
Thinking, I know, of his noble dead,
Just like a little child

Who loses from the happy home,
A mother kind and true,
And wonders if her soul's at rest,
With God in Heaven, too.

And as he lay wrapped deep in thought,
Upon his master's breast,
The radiant sun bid earth adieu,
And sank away to rest.

The gentle wind sighed through the trees
A requiem of love,
And sweet birds sang their evening lay
Of God's mercy from above.

I went my way, and left him there,
To linger with his dead,
The day was done, night's shadow fell,
And stars shone overhead.

Love for All.

I love the beauties of the fields ;
I love the clearness of the sky ;
I love all things which pleasure yields,
To charm my ever searching eye.

I love the ripple of the rill ;
I love the singing of the bird ;
I love the quiet when earth's still—
A silence that is never stirred.

I love to lie upon the sward,
To muse o'er life, and on its worth ;
I love to watch the works of God,
Which clothe and beautify the earth.

Yes, all I love, which tends to prove
A working of the Master Hand ;
These things seem born of peace and love,
Are they not rich and truly grand ?

The Storm.

The thick, black clouds scud swift across the sky,
And peaceful ocean lashes into foam,
The wild sea-gull sends forth its piercing cry,
And sea-mews sound their plaintive moan,
Portentous that a storm is nigh.

The billows leap, as with an impulse bold,
And spend their force upon the rock-bound shore,

Just as a knight with passions uncontrolled,
Fought for the hand he did adore,—
Precious, beyond the price of gold.

The storm comes on, and through the darkened cloud,
The lightning flares ; and following the flash,
Comes deep and long, the thunder rolling loud,
Which, ending with a mighty clash,
Seems if the earth to Zeus has bowed.

The fierce winds ease their howling and their might,
The lightnings cease, the thunders steal away,
When through a rift of cloud, appear in sight
The sunbeams on the earth to play,
To give it cheer and make it bright.

Sonnet.

When e'er I wander through the fields of thought,
And dwell upon the things unknown to me,
I feel an impulse tell me that I ought
Make further search and build my memory.
For things and facts are many of their kind,
And History's deeds, yes, manifold go by,
They pass unnoticed by my dreamy mind,
And in Oblivion's gulf lie.
'Tis then I feel my want of knowledge true,
I realize how time is fleeting fast,
Could erudition come to me and you,
And in our memories ever last,
Then happy strolls amid the fields of thought,
Would prove to us we've learned the things we ought.

What is Life?

Oh ! what is life ? and who can state
The many chances, true and great,
In which to shape our end ?
And mould a character so strong,
To be an ever-living song
Of gladness to extend.

Oh ! what is life ? Cannot we use
It ever as we wish or choose
To have some noble aim ?
In which to act each, every day,
Some helpful deed in careful way,
To give us honored name ?

True life is grand ! A gift so rare,
It helps the heart, to do and dare
With confidence of strength ;
Then we can feel that all we do,
Is ever noble, right and true,
Through Life's entire length.

The Chimes.

Ring, ring, ring, sweetly ringing
Tunes of gladness o'er the hills ;
Soft and slow, the pure notes flow,
And the ear with rapture fills.

Telling, telling, softly telling
A sermon in their mellow tone ;
Of the love in heaven above,
Which is God's and His alone.

Ringling, ringling, gladly ringling
Music o'er the vales and fields ;
Thus to reach men's hearts to teach
The glory which his mercy yields.

Pealing, pealing, sweetly pealing,
Comfort in their pleasant ring ;
Men will hear a summons dear,
'Tis of God of whom they sing.

Kindness.

Oftentimes kindness is richer than wealth,
Oft' doth it heal where riches would fail ;
Healeth the wound in the sad heart deep,
Wraps and enshrouds it with Purity's veil.

The harsh spoken word is a poisonous shaft,
Which buries itself in the depth of the heart ;
But words spoken kindly are joys to one's soul,
And create a happiness never to part.

Adversity comes and crushes us down,
'Tis then a *kind* word the sad heart will cheer ;
Comes as the dew to the low drooping flower,
Strengthens our hopes with memories dear.

Each word kindly spoken must show a good deed,
A deed whose sweet memory rests in our mind ;
An example for men to live by in life,
A motto to teach them to ever be kind.

John A. Bartlett.

We know not whom cold Death will call
From this bright world of ours ;
For every life yields to its touch,
And dies like wilted flowers.

The morning sun may find a smile
Upon the dew-kissed roses ;
The evening star may find death there,
When pleasant day-time closes.

To-day will find a life all joy,
But who knows of the morrow ?
May be Death's silent, stealthful hand
Will change all things to sorrow.

Thus death steals on its unknown way,
And takes lives in its keeping ;
Who knows but we may die to-night,
While we are gently sleeping ?

The Sea.

I stood one night by the heaving sea,
And gazed on the foaming waves ;
And thought as I stood there all alone,
Of its unknown, countless graves.

Those graves that lie there amid the depths,
Unseen to the eyes of man ;
Whose murmuring billows chant the dirge,
And the eye of God doth scan.

I thought of the forms that were sleeping there
In that graveyard 'neath the sea ;
And I knew that God watched o'er their rest,
With His care so tenderly.

No loving hands can e'er deck those graves
With a spray of sweetest flower ;
For they are decked with the sands of white,
By God's Almighty Power.

Roll on ! Roll on, with thy ceaseless roll !
Thou grand, majestic sea !
Thou wilt in time give up thy dead,
And reveal the mystery !

A Reverie.

Oft' in the twilight hours,
I fall in a quiet sleep ;
While dark'ning evening shadows,
Around me softly creep.

I pass to a pleasant dreamland,
With skies of a lovely blue ;
Where fields have the scent of flowers,
Which bloom the long year through.

For there live the sweet-voiced poets,
The bards who have sung for years ;
But now have gone far beyond us,
On consecrated biers.

Then songs, as a meadow brooklet,
Flow soft in our inmost souls ;
And cheer in the hours of sadness,
When sorrow strongly rolls.

I wake from that pleasant dreamland,
Imbued with a noble thought ;
I can't sing sweet as the poets,
But, like the lives they wrought,

I'll live for the best that's in me,
Live true to my brother men ;
That I and my fellow creatures
May meet in Heaven again.

The Country Road.

I wandered alone o'er an old country road,
At the break of a summer morn ;
The birds had arisen, and chanted their songs
To welcome the beautiful dawn.

The trees of the forest, in garlands of green,
With noble heads reared to the sky ;
All seemingly thanked their Creator above,
For His love and all-seeing eye.

The brook flowed along with the merriest glee,
And rippled with silvery tone ;
'Twas whispering the kindness and blessings of God,
As it bubbled o'er pebble and stone.

From its sparkling waters, the bird drank its fill,
Sweetly praised God's tenderest care,
With clearest of notes wafted soft on the breeze,
Which welcomed the fresh morning air.

The violets sparkled with diamonds of dew,
The columbine retinted red,
Were awake in the fields to greet the bright day,
For God had watched over their bed.

My steps I retraced, I soon left the old road,—
This thought was impressed on my mind :
If God sweetly cares for the birds and the flowers,
To man he is tender and kind.

A Mid-day Muse.

Oh ! could I but lie in the fields of rich clover,
Away from the noise and the din of the town,
To muse on the world and think my life over,
To dwell on the actions of men of renown !

And in that green field with its various beauties,
The clear, winding brook with its silvery tone,
I should think of dear Nature, her true, faithful duties,
And copy her virtues to make them my own.

I'd note how each bird sang its song with a spirit
Of happy contentment in Nature's domain,
And wish if the men of the world could but hear it,
To open their hearts to true living again.

In my mind I would see the far distant city,
Its fine palaced streets, its helpless and poor ;
I'd think of those lives with a kind sense of pity,
And suffer to know of the trials they endure.

I would see little children 'mid riotous living,
Where God is unknown, where His mission should be ;
And I'd wish how the love which Jesus is giving,
The poor little children could only but see.

Yes, thus would I muse in the fields of rich clover,
On my green, mossy couch, 'neath the blue summer sky ;
I should think of the world, and my own life over,
And feel that the presence of God is e'er nigh.

When We Were Boys.

When we were boys way in the long ago,
How little cared we for the world's hard things ;
For all we thought of was but Fancy's show,
Which now, alas ! we find has taken wings.

We knew not trouble, 'cept when mother warned
Our beings with the well-worn leather "slip ;"
Or father in the cellar raved and stormed,
And vowed that we bad boys he now would whip.

The pranks we acted now seem truly sad,—
The risky raft, or bathing in the lake ;
We always were in mischief—always bad,
'Tis wonder mother's heart did never break.

But then we paid the cost, and it "came high."
The keen rattan, the knotty cord of wood
We had to saw ; and always passers-by
Could see so well that we were never good.

We loved to fish in silence for the smelt,
And used to go with an old veteran brave ;
Through his tuition, bites were always felt
Beneath the gentle, undulating wave.

But when he died, how bad we "fellers" felt !
We all pitched in and bought a floral piece,
Resembling too, a perfect shining smelt,
Because our love for him would never cease.

That little deed to show our great respect,
Was kind of good for wild, unruly boys,
And on it now we often much reflect,
It seemed beyond us, for we worshiped noise.

He's in his grave, and when we wander by,
We look with reverence at the grassy mound ;
Many's the time a tear drops from the eye,
We wonder if a better rest he's found.

Those times have gone, the joys of boyhood's hour,
And now the depth of life comes to the heart ;
Those youthful days were of our life its flower,
And from them with reluctance did we part.

Sonnet.

Oft in the quiet night amid our dreams,
The vision of a new life comes to view,
And, as we wonder o'er the change, it seems
That we can see our past existence too.
The former deeds and actions that have spent
Their little lives, and are again no more,
Spurs us anew with noble, true intent,
To wear again the laurels we once wore.
And thus the future opens up a way,
In which to live the very best we can,
An ever thoughtful life, yes, every day,
This characterizes and makes the man.
Thus dreams portray some kind and helpful thought,
To cheer us on to live the life we ought.

The King's Daughter.

'Twas in London, at midnight hour,
On a night which was bleak and cold,
Where the old, famous London Tower
Looks down on a street, I'm told,

There stood a child young and tender,
Bare-legged and scantily clad ;
With limbs so blue and so slender,
Though her heart seemed happy and glad.

She was standing there doing her duty,
Selling matches to those who went by,
On her face there were still marks of beauty,
There was peace and content in her eye.

Those matches she sold for her mother,
On the street, in the darkness of night,
To help a sick sister and brother,
To make their lives cheerful and bright.

By chance a young woman went by her,
And noticed how thin she was clad ;
Through pity, she gladly went nigh her,
With noble heart softened and sad.

“ My little one ! Why are you wand’ring
Alone in this midnight air ?
Tell me why, my dear, you are pond’ring,
Standing here with limbs cold and bare ? ”

“ O ‘ missus,’ my sister and brother
Are sick and are going to die ;
I’m selling these matches for mother,—
I hate to see mother cry.

“ My father lies drunk and is swearing
At sister and brother to-night,
And I’m on the street ever caring,
To make mother’s burden seem light.”

That speech touched the heart of the maiden,
Who took the child's hand in her own,
And went to that home sorrow-laden,
For there must God's goodness be sown.

Down lanes and dark alleys they wandered,
With wickedness on every side,
Men and women whose lives had been squandered,
In whose souls had nobility died.

At length they stopped, and both listened
At the noises that came from within,
All the light was a candle which glistened
In that miserable hovel of sin.

The little child said, with great sadness,
"Dare you enter my home here to-night?
My father is drunk, and his madness
Will cause you much sorrow and fright."

But this maiden was bent on her duty;
She entered that room cold and dim,
And longed to reveal that sweet beauty,
The blessed forgiveness of Him.

She approached the poor man in the corner,
And spoke a few words soft and kind,
'Till it seemed that the true soul of honor
Began to enlighten his mind.

And from his eyes bleared and sunken,
A tear found its way down his face,—
God softens the hearts of the drunken,
Enlightens their spirit with grace.

With a soft, choking voice, he implored her
To tell of the Kingdom above,
And of the great King who restored *her*
To the consciousness of His love.

Then she said "This cross I am wearing,
Speaks well of the circle I'm in.
The King's Daughters, yes, always are caring
For those in the mire of sin.

We are glad to go forth on our duty,
For little we look after fame.
We know 'tis a mission of beauty,
And act for the right 'In His Name.'

May God guide you all in your living,
And bless this home once again !
He ever is graciously giving
A blessed forgiveness to men."

Then the mother, with eyes wet with weeping,
Saw her husband smile sweet once more,
And she longed for her dear Saviour's keeping,
Which she never had thought of before.

That morning that household was cheerful,
The little ones' hearts were glad,
No eyes could be seen which were tearful,
No face that was downcast or sad.

God's love had come down as a blessing,
On those lives in that poor, old room,
And the parents and children caressing,
Drove away all the old-time gloom.

And that home is a place of contentment,
Father toils by the sweat of his brow,
There is neither cross word nor resentment,
For they are all happy now.

* * * * *

Such acts are seeds worth the sowing,
They neither bring riches nor fame,
'Tis a blessed contentment in knowing
We're doing our part "In His Name."

The Goldenrod.

The fields one afternoon I trod,
Amidst the blooming goldenrod ;
Which, in the breeze did gently nod,
With motions full of grace.
The earth seemed of a golden hue,
While o'er me were the skies of blue,
And happy birds with fleetness flew
Around from place to place.

I mused throughout each pleasant hour
On this accepted Nation's flower,
And even in a distant bower
I saw the yellow sprays ;
How well I knew what magic hand
Had decked and clothed surrounding land,
As with the richest golden band !
To God is due the praise.

I lingered there till eventide,
And saw the sun in splendor ride,

And disappear beneath the tide
Of seas of golden fire ;
Then came the grandest view to me,—
The goldenrod, each shrub and tree,
Came forth in colors as that sea,
My mind to glad inspire.

The blending of the sea of gold,
With goldenrod so manifold ;
To me a simple lesson told,
A lesson of great worth.
Could Heaven's reflection fall on men,
To have their lives shine true again ;
To live their very best, why then
We'd have a noble earth.

A Shooting Star.

I stood on a rocky headland,
And gazed far o'er the sea ;
I heard the song of rolling waves
In their mournful harmony.

The evening mantle was o'er the earth,
And Heaven's stars shone bright ;
I was alone with the world and God,—
It was a perfect night.

And as I watched, I beheld a star
Drop from the sable sky
Into the depths of the deep below,
Far from my eager eye.

Swift it had shot from the realms above,
What would its mission be?
Had it a message or word from God?
Had it one thought for me?

How could I think but God sent that star,
Burning with grace and love ;
An emblem to touch the souls of men,
To tell of that home above?

O falling star ! Did I see in thee
God's mercy broad and wide,
E'en though thou shot as a phantom swift
Into the ocean's tide?

Christmas Bells.

What mean these bells, that ring so clear
Upon this bright December day?
What is the ringing that we hear?
This merry chime of bells at play?
Ring on sweet bells ! Send far this morn,
The story how the Christ was born.

How glad the world appears this morn !
Why happiness on land and sea ?
The sky above knows Christ was born,
And nature tells the tale to me.
Her naked pines proud rear their heads,
And Consciousness her kingdom treads.

Dear nature loves this Day of Days,
And all her wealth, hid deep from view,

Is resting sweet, while Christ's dear ways
Pervade the woods and meadows through,—
The tiny fern, the trailing vine,
Well know the care of Him Divine.

How soft upon the winter air,
The bells peal forth the glad refrain !
Which, floating gently here and there,
Asks men to seek their Lord again ;
Through towns and cities on it goes,
And every clang a good seed sows.

The rippling brook takes up the song,
Commingles with the sweet-voiced bells,
And helps the pæan of Him along,
Through pleasant farms, o'er hills and dells ;
Thus bells and nature sing the praise
Of Christ upon this Day of Days.

Ring on sweet bells ! and may thy peals
Bring back Christ's love to men once more ;
Stir some lone heart that never feels
An impulse of the heavenly shore ;
Ring on sweet bells ! and may thy voice
To some soul bring a sacred choice !

Oh ! send thy tones to prison-cell !
Oh ! send thy voice to wicked den !
Oh ! spread thy word, that it may tell
The blessed birth of Christ to men !
And through the silv'ry voice of thine,
Some heart may find its heavenly shrine.

Ring faithful bells ! and may thy tone
Waft far upon the breeze to sea ;

There where the billows surge and moan,
Create a glorious harmony,
That all the world may hear the song,—
The lonely one—the gathered throng !

Ring silvered bells ! and o'er the mound
Of those who sleep in perfect rest,
May thy dear message e'er abound,
With love and mercy o'er the blest.
Those noble dead ! May peace and grace
Be showered o'er the hallowed place !

The bells of heaven ring this morn,
And angel voices fill the air ;
They sing the story, how was born
Our Christ, our Lord, our Saviour fair.
Thus Christmas Day in heaven above,
Abounds in canticles of love.

May heaven and earth forever blend
With songs of gladness to His name !
And in the souls of men descend,
For Jesus loves them all the same ;
And all the sins of earth forgiven ?
Repentance ! Then the Gates of Heaven.

Ring, Christmas bells ! Forever ring
The glorious story of His birth !
Ring, Christmas bells ! Forever bring
The love of Christ to all the earth !
Ring, Christmas bells ! Oh ! ring away !
God loves to bless each Christmas Day.

Sherman.

The deep-toned bell pealed on the evening air,
And Death seemed there within the solemn tone ;
What was the news, deep tolling to my ear ?
Had God claimed Sherman as His own ?

Had that great hero closed his earthly life
To dwell with God in kingdom far above ?
To march with honor through the Heavenly Gate,
Into the realm of peace,—eternal love ?

Cold Death had come and claimed our honored son ;
He died with record worthy to our land,
And that great soul is marching on with God,
To join a true and nobler band.

Memorial Day.

Dear sacred day ! with memories blest
Of those who died, their flag to save,
Of those who sweet in slumber rest,
On battlefield, or 'neath the wave.

Those heroes brave who, one by one,
Died for their country's honored name ;
With gallant deeds were their duties done,
Which crown their brows with wreaths of fame.

Memorial Day an impulse brings,
Reveals the triumphs of those men ;
And Liberty their glory sings,
Of battlefield and prison-pen.

Where nobler acts, than when we place
The wreaths of flowers o'er their mounds?
In doing this, we add a grace,
With which their memory sweet resounds.

The living heroes march with tread,
Slow and weak through the trials of years;
They deck the graves of their brother-dead,
Express their love with mingled tears.

They know there is a coming day,
When they shall rest beneath the sod;
And join their comrades far away,—
Patrol the camp ground of their God.

May this great day, for e'er through life
Be sacred for the heroes brave;
Who won their laurels 'mid hard strife,
Our country's flag, our land to save.

The Song of the Sea.

Oh! cold, relentless sea! Thy waters dash
With grandeur on the coast,
Charging the bold, gray cliffs,
As some great battling host.
There is a strength in thee
Made manifest by wave,
There are deep thoughts, O, sea!
Thou art a common grave.
E'en in the pearly shell,
From caverns far below,

Is a rare thought to tell
Tidings we never know ;
Tales of the coral field,
Of God's Acre there,
Lips firm in silence sealed,
No message to bear.

O cold, relentless sea ! Thy waters break
Into a fleecy white ;
And 'neath the stars of Heaven,
Twinkling in distance bright,
Thy voice speaks deep and long
Something unknown to me ;
Is that grand, solemn song
Music beneath the sea ?
Sweetly upon the ear
Falleth the deep refrain,
Coming with cadence dear
The music of the main.
Oh ! may the ceaseless singing,
So grand and sweet to me,
To my ears e'er be bringing,
The ocean's litany !

Can I Ever Forget.

Can I ever forget ? Can I ever forget
The days of my youth that are over ?
When, on every morn, a new pleasure was born,
And life was as sweet as the clover ?

Can I ever forget? Can I ever forget
The wood where the spring was the clearest?
Or the sweet singing bird, which my youthful soul stirred,
And brought me fond mem'ries the dearest.

Can I ever forget? Can I ever forget
The pond where I fished with my brother?
And its lilies so fair, sweetly scenting the air,—
Ah, no! I could wish for no other.

Can I ever forget? Can I ever forget
The bank where the violets lingered?
Where a maiden and I, 'neath the bright summer sky,
Their petals so tenderly fingered.

Can I ever forget? Can I ever forget
That love of my young boyish hours?
When my heart beat light, and my day had no night,
I dwelt in a kingdom of flowers.

Can I ever forget? Can I ever forget
Her death, and how sadly I missed her?
When her young form they laid by the field, where we played,
So near where the first time I kissed her.

Can I ever forget? Can I ever forget
Her grave, where each morning I wandered?
There I found peace and ease 'neath the murmuring trees,
As over her grave, sad I pondered.

Can I ever forget? Can I ever forget
The voice that was sweet as the roses?
And the smile on her face, overflowing with grace,
I'll love till my memory closes.

No, I'll never forget ! I will never forget,
Those times or the scenes that I cherished ;
I can see them no more, for their sweet is long o'er,
The joy and the beauty have perished.

The Divine Presence.

Is not it dear, the joy of childhood's hour,
When life is gay, and free from cares and trials ?
No sorrows of the heart to spirit lower,
But all is sunshine, all is love and smiles :
For life glides on unruffled as a stream,
And in the heart dark shadows find no place ;
But true enlightenment, blessed peace and grace
Abound therein—existence seems a dream.

The years drift by, and all that was of cheer,
Is slightly faded as a withering rose :
For life has lost some of its joys once dear,
And trouble comes ; the reason, ah ! who knows ?
Now once light heart is tortured with the pains
Of earthly care—the loss of some true friend ;
We ask ourselves, who will the sorrow mend.
Our best we've lost, and who with us remains ?

God doth remain. He lingers in the heart,
And fans the dying embers of the soul,
Which, kindling bright, gives life a nobler start
To win in triumph at the nearing goal.
Then life takes on its former childlike phase,
And looks with fondness towards the gates of Heaven.
To dwell within the Home, which God has given,—
Eternal life, unceasing Love and Praise.

God in Nature.

We can find worthy lessons in Nature,
How our lives may be noble and true,
How our hearts may be clear with sweet virtue,
As the summer sky is with its blue.

We can find helpful thoughts in the meadows,
In the ripple of soft flowing stream,
In whose clear and bright silver waters,
The sunlight of Heaven doth gleam.

We may find, hid from view, a fair flower,
Which blooms for the world, and for God,
Yet lives its pure life deep in shadow,
On the bank of green, velvety sod.

And from scenes like this in dear Nature,
True lessons of life we oft find,
How God guards the lives of the flowers,
And all other things of their kind.

Is not Nature, then, a true teacher,
To reveal the truth of God's love,
And proclaim to the world, in sweet silence,
The blessings of Jesus above?

The Woods.

Grand are the woods primeval !
Whose giant pines o'er-arching country wide,
Have seen the years glide by upon the stream
Of time. In them is a grandeur deep and wild,

And a thought suggestive of former times,
When they alone stood sentinels of God,
To guard the land to white men then unseen.
Some have fall'n victims to the elements,
And bow their once proud heads to earth
In reverence. Others, through age, have felt
Their strength weaken as in the human life ;
But still they stand, patriarchs of the wood,
Worn and shattered, to linger for awhile,
And then be swallowed by destruction.
What mighty storms have battled with their branches !
And how, like old phalanx, have they withstood
All onslaughts ! Whene'er I wander through domain
Of forest, I feel a consciousness which tells
Me of the magic hand of the Creator.
Where I see strength in the stalwart pines,
I also find peace and love in blue-eyed violets,
Living their unobtrusive lives, in hidden spots,
In some sequestered dell. The pines show might,
But there is a greater might in the simplicity
Of the sweet blue flowers. They are living
Examples of purity, sweetness, and virtue,
Giving a noble thought. The woods shall live,
Telling of the mercy of God, and revealing
His divine care for all the things of earth.

Thoughts.

I drank from a spring at the foot of the hill,
Near the close of a warm summer day,
I heard the sweet notes of the numerous birds,
As they chanted their evening lay.

I seated myself at the side of that spring,
And mused on the workings of God.
How rich were the leaves as they stirred with the wind !
And how green was the velvety sod !

As I mused, a small bird came down from above,
And drank from the waters so clear ;
How noble he stood with uplifted head,
As if never acquainted with fear !

And I thought how if men could hold their heads high,
Like the bird could have conscience so clear,
Why then they would live in a true, noble age,
And life would be worthy and dear.

Sonnet.

O Life, how mystical thou art !
One day brings joy, the other sadness ;
And keeps the nature of the heart
In sorrow or in gladness.
Some days have the bright sun shining,
Clouds of doubt and fear roll by,
Followed by those of a silver lining,
Filling with glories Life's changeful sky.
But the world keeps on its ceaseless roll ;
'Tis only God who is our friend.
He lingers by, and makes the soul
Noble and true to that coming end,
When narrow graves will claim the forms
Who've triumphed o'er Life's countless storms.

The Churchyard.

Beside the old, moss-covered church,
O'er which the ivy climbs,
The graves lie lonely, one by one,
Beneath the whispering pines.

Beneath the pines, whose murmurs so
Chant lullabys of rest,
To sanctify the hallowed ground
With dearest memories blest.

For 'neath the green and tufted sod,
Some lives sleep on in ease,
Relieved from Life's hard, irksome toil,
Its great activities.

Silently those lives are sleeping
Neath the murm'ring pines,
Resting by the old, old church,
O'er which the ivy climbs.

To a Spirit.

Thou comest to me in the still of the night,
Far, far from thy home in God's kingdom of light ;
I see, in my dreams, thy dear spirit from high,
Soar swift, as a bird, through the dark midnight sky,

Then enterest my room and keepest watch o'er my bed ;
How clear is the halo of light round thy head !
But why dost thou come and ne'er speak me a word ?
'Tis peaceful as death, not a whisper is heard !

Thou knowest my friends in that city above,
Where day is eternal, and all things are love ;
Thy silence casts over my young heart a gloom,—
The secret is found by the way of the tomb !

Oh ! pray do reveal me a thought of that place !
One thought will make firm my character's base,
And I shall grow nobler, and worship the love
Of God our dear Father in Heaven above.

Thou knowest it all ; and the beautiful shore,
Where feet of immortals are wandering o'er,
Whose deep silent river flows swift on its way,
And beareth the soul to awakening day !

Oh ! tell of the glories, which compass around
The home of the angels in that hallowed ground,
Where flowers the fairest breathe forth a sweet scent,
And all things are holy,—need never repent !

I'm longing to hear of the heavenly choirs,
How sweet are the voices, how soft are the lyres ?
I still am in doubt, and my mind is in gloom,—
The secret is found by the way of the tomb !

Kind spirit ! thou carest for me while I rest,
I feel in my heart that thy kingdom is best ;
For dreams oft are factors to prove the sweet love,
Which only is found in God's mansion above.

Farewell, gentle spirit ! The morning's most here,
The birds of the meadows will soon warble clear,
I'll think of thy Heaven, though dark be the gloom,—
The secret is found by the way of the tomb !

The Dove's Mission.

"Pull hard my men ! Before yon distant sun
Departs and leaves the world to-night at rest,
This pale-faced sailor's life then will be done.
Pull on ! pull on ! 'Tis one league to the west !

"We'll take his life upon the coral isle,
Where flows the pirate's spring so cool and clear,
Where sparkling sunbeams look from Heaven and smile
Upon the birds that haunt the woodlands dear."

And with a stroke far stronger than before,
The swarthy crew speed on the winged boat,
When, from the nearing, purple tinted shore,
Is heard a dove's soft, mellow cooing note.

And listening to the tone so pure and sweet,
The pirate captain's fierceness seemed to change,
"To me," said he, "this soft voice is a treat,
And why is it my heart feels wildly strange?"

They landed on the isle at eventide,
And heard the birds with rapturous music sing ;
When, wandering to the beauteous shaded side
Of the clear waters of the pirate's spring,

A dove was seen to lift its tiny head,
As if to thank its Maker for His care,
It never started at the pirate's tread,
But looked towards God with self-complacent air.

This act of innocence, the heart impressed,
Of him the leader of the motley crew ;

And, turning to his men, he thus addressed,
"My boys ! this act of murder ne'er will do !"

"This little dove 'so pure, so sweet and white,
Carries my mind back to the long ago.
The past of boyhood cometh to my sight,
I had a pet, a dove as white as snow ;

And how can I, with memories of the past,
Destroy the life of him so young and fair ?
Come ! to the boats ! pull on my men ! pull fast !
This sailor breathes again his native air !"

That night the pirate's brig sailed on its way,
Far, far upon the quiet, tropic sea ;
The dove remained upon the isle to stay,
To live for God and for humanity.

Sonnet.

Uncertain life ! Pray spread thy curtain wide,
That through the past forgotten I may gaze,
And see the hopes on which I once relied
With happy fondness in my youthful days !
'Twas like a dream, those empty boyhood hours,
When oft I built rich castles in the air,
Clothed with the ivy, and sweet summer flowers,
Which now have gone,—and oft I wonder where !
Faded from view, 'till now my searching mind
Meets with the troubles which gather ev'ry day.

Oh, unknown future ! How is my life designed ?
Grasp my weak hand and lead me on the way,
Where triumphs, honors, virtues, e'er abound,
And true success will ring its cheerful sound !

August Days.

Sweet August days, I'll sound thy praise
With pleasure to receptive earth ;
In thee I see, charms dear to me,
And loveliness of noble worth !

The sparkling stream, the lights that gleam,
Upon the bosom of the lake,
And shadows deep, and vines that creep,
Yes, all my eager fancies take.

The linnet's song, the flowers which throng,
The velvet promenade of fields,
And daises white give me delight,
As all things do that nature yields.

Sweet August days, you seem ablaze
With myriads of lovely things,
And then at night there flickers bright,
The firefly's transparent wings.

From Heaven deep, the bright stars peep,
Sweet angel thoughts they seem to me ;
They cast their light with radiance bright,
Into the mirror of the sea.

Oh, glorious days, I'll sing your praise
With cheerful heart, and gladsome voice ;
My favored time, I'll weave in rhyme,
You are my happy days by choice !

The Wreck at Sea.

Far out on the ocean, with its long swelling motion,
I saw an old wreck of a ship good and true ;
Her sides worn and battered, her mast broken, shattered,
Revealed a sad tale, a tale I ne'er knew.

As I gazed on that vessel, and saw her hard wrestle
With the mountainous waves of the wild rolling sea,
It brought me but sorrow, and I thought of the morrow,
And wondered and mused what it would bring to me.

Perhaps this old ranger had yielded to danger,
When the previous day had been pleasant and mild,
On the following morning, without slightest warning,
Surrendered herself to the elements wild.

Her bright days were over, that once noble rover,
And now she drifts victim to billow and wave,
And the crew which once guided, in my mind I decided,
Were sleeping in peace in their watery grave.

In that deep silent hour, I thought of death's power,
And knew that we lived at God's mercy so broad ;
Through the grand heaving ocean, I felt a devotion,
" Be still and know that I am your God ! " .

Thus through years that are fleeting, and our trials we are meeting
On the ocean of life, with the storms and its peace,
May our barque ne'er be shattered, to oblivion scattered,
And the truth and the love of our hearts never cease.

Doth Death End Life ?

Doth Death end life ? Doth life turn dust,
And moulder into clay ?
Or is there better day,
When soul doth dwell with God we trust,
The God to whom we pray ?

We march to Death. With measured tread
We plod our weary feet
To reach the end ; to meet
Some brother there to join the dead,
To gain the Holy Seat.

And as we gather at the gate,
Which guards the heavenly place,
With love, and peace, and grace,
The angels welcome ; we await
To see our Saviour's face.

And, once within, the angels sing
The praise of Christ our Lord,
In tones of sweet accord ;
And, on the throne, we see our King,
Our Hope, our Guide, our Ward.

The Organist.

What are his fingers telling
As they glide o'er the ivory keys,
Producing those grand chords, swelling
In myriad harmonies?

The tones have a soul-like feeling,
As they float and fall on my ear,
It seems that a spirit is stealing
Through the chambers of song so clear.

The tremulous tones are so airy,
With their gentle far-away notes ;
That it seems like the voice of a fairy,
With a chorus of elves' small throats.

The soft strains swell with a rolling,
Till all ends with inspiring chord,
To my heart, it is sweet and consoling,
For it speaks of the grace of the Lord.

Summer-Time.

The summer-time reveals to me
The beauty of the woods and sea,
The laughing brook, the mountain rill,
The valley deep, the birds that fill
The fields and meadows with the notes,
Which issue from a thousand throats,
And make a symphony sublime,
Suggestive of the summer-time.

I wander at the break of dawn,
Before the sun has kissed the morn,
Upon the bold and rock-bound shore,
Which waves of centuries have wore,
Where rent and fissure in the rock
Tell of the ocean's mighty shock,
And of its strength, which often gave
Some gallant craft to unknown grave.
The sky above is cold and gray,
Portentous of a stormy day,
When through the clouds appear in view
Small patches of cerulean hue,
And from the bosom of the sea,
The sun comes in his majesty.
At his command the bright rays gleam,—
Arouses nature from her dream,
Who, startled at the quick surprise
Of him, the master of the skies,
Calls forth her children far and near,
To bless his welcomed presence here.
The stormy day the sky assured,
Is hidden—in some way obscured,
And all the earth and wide, wide sea
Rejoice—the sun's grand sovereignty.
I tarry by the rolling main,
And long to see the sight again,
And, as I muse, my mind goes back
Upon old History's lengthened track :
I seem to see those craft of old,
That sought for Eldorado's gold,
And Norsemen brave, who cruised along
'Midst revel wild and drunken song,
Whose myth-like tale is handed down

By tower at old Newport town.
And as I gaze far o'er the sea,
In this, my summer reverie,
I find the day is speeding fast,
And I must leave, so then I cast
My eyes once more upon the view,—
The deep green sea, the sky of blue.
I leave the spot, and in my mind
Think where is equal of its kind,
And who could see a finer morn,—
Be present when the day was born.

I wander in the afternoon,
The earth is decked, and seems in tune
With every living thing in June.
Before me lies no sunlit sea
To charm me on to reverie,
But all are fields and mountain sides,
Adown whose slopes in laughter glides
The rippling brook, whose waters bright
Gleam in the rays of golden light.
I sit upon a fallen birch,
And in the river watch the perch
Swim with their motions full of grace ;
And in the waters, shadows lie
Of woody bank and sunny sky,
And I am in a perfect place,
Where I can dwell on noble things,
And fly away on Fancy's wings.
I muse upon the works of God,
And watch the flowers gently nod
Their fair heads in the peaceful breeze,
Which wafts among the many trees.

Yes, I am in the forest wild,
Adopted as dear Nature's child,
And as I wander o'er her realm,
There comes a song to overwhelm
The deep recesses of my soul,
Where harmonies in grandeur roll.
'Tis but the singing of a bird,
That has my soul with rapture stirred,
And how can I but wish to know
The reason why he warbles so?
Upon a branch of yonder tree,
He singeth to the world and me,
And I believe that in his breast,
True, noble thoughts remain at rest ;
For what thinks he of earthly care,
When God is with him, everywhere?

The afternoon has reached its close,
And earth prepares for night's repose ;
The cattle from the leafy shade,
Their master's summons have obeyed,
And all that with me lingers by,
Is wild domain and arch of sky.
I see the sun depart for rest
Upon his bed in distant west,
And from the wake of red and gold,
Come colors rich and manifold.
Their tinted rays shine on the stream,
And add enchantment to my dream.
Now one by one the shadows fall,
And night spreads o'er the earth her pall ;
The stars shine bright in distant sky,
With brilliance flashes fire-fly ;
The bull-frogs croak their deepened bass,

And crickets chirp in every place,
And thus there comes with joy to me,
One soul-inspiring harmony.
But now the greatest scene of all,
The moon appears o'er branches tall,
And sheds its mellow golden light
Until the world seems clear and bright.
The beams steal in to where I lie,
And in the river flowing by,
The stars of Heaven, reflecting clear,
Bring many thoughts to memory dear.
I wander on to humble home,
No more in forest wild to roam,
And in my dreams I hope to see
The day just passed, so dear to me.
And I will praise the day of June,
When I with nature held commune.
I'll also think of rolling main,
And wish that I was there again ;
Or by the stream within the wood,
Where I could muse in solitude.
Thus ends the day ; it was sublime,
As always is the summer time.

June.

The bright streams are flowing, the flowers are growing
On the green mossy banks, with their beauties so rare,
With the gray, misty dawning, comes the sweetness of morning,
Whose sweet, dewy freshness mellows the air.

The sky hath its clearness, the birds have a dearness
In the sweet, cheerful notes, as they carol their tune,
At the base of the mountain, dash the brooks as a fountain,
These things we can find in the glories of June.

The May has departed, the summer has started,
And the woodlands and meadows proclaim the glad tale,
From the denseness of thicket comes the chirp of the cricket,
And Nature's sweet voice wafts o'er hill and o'er vale.

When the sun has descended, and its colors have blended
In the beautiful wake of its course in the west,
When the shadows of night gather over the light,
And Nature reposes herself in sweet rest.

Sweet June of rare beauty, it should be our duty
To worship and love the grand glories of thine,
We can find in thy charms, pure, natural balms,
To influence life—mould it near the Divine !

“God is Love.”

When'er we gaze on the trees and flowers,
The bubbling brooks, and flowing streams,
The fields and meadows, the greenest bowers,
O'er which the sunlight softly gleams ;
We think of God's unbounded love.

That mighty love, which fills our being
With deep respect and love for good ;
Each, every day our acts He's seeing,
And never lets unworth intrude,
But sends rich blessings from above.

With Christ our guide, should our lives not be
Forever given to true deeds?
True honor, love and integrity,
In life's deep soil would be our seeds ;
It would be so, for "God is love."

Arise, O Saddened Heart, Arise !

Arise, O saddened heart, arise
From all thy grief and woe !
And seek a life with clearer skies,
Where peaceful waters flow ;
Where men *are men* of noble aim,
And elevated mind,
Within whose souls, e'er burns the flame
Of actions true and kind !

Arise, O saddened heart, arise !
Cast off thy shroud of pain,
And seek a Love which never dies,
But falleth like the rain
Upon the fields in summer-time
To cheer the drooping flower,
And make it feel, as though spring-time
Was passing by each hour !

Arise, O saddened heart, arise,
And seek the love of God !
Within His care are perfect skies,
And flow'rs which gently nod
Their tiny heads upon the breeze,

As bending low in prayer,
To bless the One who ever sees
That they have sweetest care !
And, once arisen, happy heart
Forever keep thy peace !
Reveal to men how true thou art,
With truth to never cease ;
And may each beat send forth a strain
From heart-strings sweet and low,
To make thy brothers' love again
That Love, so dear to know !

The Old Bridle.

There's a hist'ry in that bridle,
Though it now is worn and old,
And has hung from yonder rafter,
For years, yes, manifold.
If you knew, my friend, the mem'ries
The sight of it brings to me,
Your heart would be touched as mine is
The worth of old Dick you'd see.
From the faithful horse of our household,
He arose to the carnage of war ;
I rode him in many a battle,
When our country we both struggled for.
But I'll never forget that May morning,
When we left this beautiful farm,
And went for our God and our country,
To answer the nation's alarm.

'Twas a day I shall always remember,
When I rode Dick up to the door,
Where stood my wife and my children,
And they cried as never before.

For to lose their pet true and noble,
Who had rode them o'er hill and o'er plain ;
Was a blow mighty hard to get over,—
Would they see the old fellow again?

He went with me on to the conflict,
There was honor and strength in his eye ;
He took me through peace and through danger,
He loved the wild battle-cry.

And it seemed that he knew that his country
Depended on heroes like him,
As he charged through the ranks of the rebels
With a wonderful courage and vim.

One night, while alone on our duty,
When earth seemed an enchanted spell ;
There burst on the ground right before him,
A wicked, death-seeking shell.

A fragment tore into my charger,
And ripped his broad stalwart chest ;
He fell in the midst of the thicket,
But, my friend, imagine the rest !

Just think of my loss and my sorrow,
Of Dick so faithful and true ;
When he died for his flag and his country
On the bank of the muddy bayou.

I took from his neck this old bridle,
And treasure it e'en to this day ;
When Dick and I for our Union,
Went into the midst of the fray.

Now the children have grown men and women,
But they never forget the good steed,
Who rode them o'er valley and hillside,
Or over the sweet scented mead.

And with the loss of dear mother,
Old Dick shares our memories still ;
Mother sleeps in the quiet graveyard,
At the foot of yon woody hill.

Dick sleeps in a grave now forgotten,
On the banks of the muddy bayou ;
But that bridle on yon dusty rafter,
Brings memories tender and true !

Sonnet.

Some days are dark and drear to me,
No sun of joy shines o'er my life,
For all is sorrow that I see
Amidst the trying, anxious strife.
But when some good friend takes my hand
To cheer me on, and make me gay,
Why then I take a firmer stand,
And strive to live such, yes, alway.
The sky of life then seems to clear,
Till all is of a glorious hue,

And life moves with contentment dear,
Its paths I wander gladly through ;
And all my friends, I love their deeds,
This sowing noble, fruitful seeds.

Hon. W. A. Horton.

As a distant sail, vanishing on the deep,
His good life drifted to the great unseen ;
Silently, sweetly, he laid him down to sleep,
Wrapped in his character above things mean.
And his soul, so pure, soared through December skies,
Ent'ring with peace, the sacred gates above,
Leaving on earth, those rich, endearing ties,
A happy home, a worthy public's love.
Yes, his life is o'er ; no more his feet shall tread
Familiar paths among his fellow-men,
Though the form we loved is numbered with the dead,
His thoughts will live, an e'er undying pen ;
And in the hearts of all who knew his ways,
Will burn the lamp of true, unstinted praise.

Strew their Graves.

Dedicated to Phil H. Sheridan Post 34, G. A. R.

Strew their graves with wreaths and flowers !
Tender offerings to the dead ;
Those who died on fields of glory,
Those who for our country bled.

O'er each mound stands faithful Freedom,
On this day of all the year ;
And she stoops with love to bless them,
Dropping oft a kindly tear.

As the living heroes gather
At the soldiers' place of rest,
Bygone memories float before them,
Hearts beat firm in every breast ;

And they think of how they're marching
On to join their comrades true,
Looking towards that grand reunion
Of the dear old "Boys in Blue."

And they place the flag symbolic,
O'er each soldier's honored clay,
Doing honor to his memory,
On this bright Memorial Day.

Then they leave their sleeping brothers,
On the sweet May afternoon,
While the band strikes chords melodic,
From some old familiar tune.

But who stays and weaves a tribute,
Which no human lips can bring ?
Naught but robins of the woodland—
God has told them what to sing.

'Neath the Snow.

Whene'er we gaze upon the hills
And meadows lying wrapped in white,
And hear the ripple of the rills
Which gambol down the snowy height,
We wonder if the flowers know
Why God has kept them 'neath the snow.

We think them dead—not that they are—
'Tis but the yearly winter sleep ;
In springtime, like a morning star,
They from the long night's darkness peep,
And bloom into the matchless shade,
Which God's own master hand hath made.

Our hearts are lying 'neath the snow,
Oft longer than the winter sleep ;
No sunny beam bursts into glow
The sinful chambers dark and deep ;
It would shine in, if we but trod
The path to virtue and to God.

And, with the entrance of that beam,
The snows of sin melt fast away,
Until the heart, long hid, will seem
As if new-born, its first Spring-Day.
It then will join the waking flowers,
In giving joy to bless Life's hours.

South Church Organ.

Just as a life whose usefulness has passed,
The rich-voiced organ bids its sad adieu.
No more to speak in service of the Lord,
To sound His praise with music ever new.

No more will e'er be heard the inspiring tone
Which issued from its many mouths of gold,
From which the Truth soared up in harmony,
And through the church with grandeur deeply rolled.

Who can forget its presence there for years?
And how familiar was its voice so grand,
Which glad responded to a magic touch,
Bringing soft echoes from a spirit-land.

O faithful one ! How many thou hast seen
Borne far away across that gentle stream,
Where Jesus lives, and leads the hosts of God,
In Zion fair, that sweet eternal dream !

And from the pulpit, blessed with the name
Of one who ministered, God's servant true,
To his responses came thy grand Amen,—
A soul-like blending of the two.

And, with the loss of him who preached for God,
Thou, faithful singer, leav'st the hallowed place,
Though thou depart, thy spirit will through time,
Still linger sweet in memory and grace.

Thy work is o'er and those who gather there,
Will seem to hear the long-lost voice of thine ;
Thy loss is great, but recollections dear
Will stay within our hearts in love divine.

Doth the Tomb Hold All?

When life is o'er, when its trials have passed,
And it seeks the silent tomb,
Doth it lie there clothed forever in death,
Amidst sepulchral gloom?

Doth it dwell there all in darkness,
Remote from loving hand?
Or doth it find a higher home
Within the heavenly land?

Can tight-barred door withhold the soul,
The soul that's claimed by God?
And shall it dwell through age of time,
Beneath the tufted sod?

Ah, no! No mortal power can keep
The soul that's found God's trust;
Though body lieth there fore'er,
And crumbles into dust,

The soul will take a heavenly flight,
And journey on to be
Received with grace in God's dear realm,
To dwell forever free.

A Thought from Spring.

I strolled the fields in budding Spring,
When nature seemed to sweetly sing,
The praise of God on high;
The birds with notes so soft and clear,

The rivulet with waters clear,
The ever deep-blue sky,
Revealed in silent words the love
Which God doth give from heaven above.

Each blade of grass, retinted green,
The velvet moss, enhanced the scene
With pleasures ever new ;
And in the woody forest wild,
Living their pure lives undefiled,
Violets sweetly grew,
Which showed the greatness of God's care,
To watch them while they nurtured there.

I found a thought in budding Spring,
A thought in after-life to cling,
And dwell within my mind.
God cares for all—why cannot men,
Like nature start their lives again
To be forever kind,
And e'er respect the gracious love,
That comes from God of Heaven above?

The Poet's End.

All alone, with head reclining
On his noble, aged breast,
Sat the poet in a reverie,
Dreaming of approaching rest.

His sweet songs of inspiration,
No more from his heart-strings rolled,
For his life was worn and weary,
And its youthful fervor cold.

There he sat among his volumes,
Musing o'er the days gone by,
Which he saw drift far beyond him,
With his fading, tearful eye.

And the books which cheered his hours,
Happy children of his mind,
Looked down on their friend declining,
Saw him to his fate resign.

There he sat near glowing fire,
In the quaint, old-fashioned room,
While the falling, evening shadows
Closed o'er him in solemn gloom.

His pure heart was light and happy,
As he mused there all alone,
Ev'ry moment brought some blessing,
Giving life a nobler tone.

Sweet he dreamed of singing angels,
And the chosen ones on high,
But the song was so much sweeter
Than his own of years gone by.

As the rays of dying embers
Paled their light upon the floor,
His good life went up to Heaven,
Joining those who passed before.

Thus he died, this gifted singer,
With his head upon his breast,
But his voice sings verse much sweeter
Than of earthly songs the best.

A Baby's Grave.

Little one so sweetly sleeping
In thy small and tiny grave,
O'er thy mound are daisies growing,
Daisies that thy Father gave !

Softly nodding their heads gently,
'Neath the skies of purest blue,
God, though tending to their beauty,
Ne'er forgets dear baby you !

Close he watches o'er thee, darling,
Though thy soul is far above,
Singing with His chosen angels,
In that realm of peace and love !

The Fern's Farewell.

The Autumn time has bid adieu,
And Winter's silvery train,
Throngs wood and vale, whose promenades
Greet his return again.

All conscious of his entrance grand,
The fern prepared to go,

And called her comrades of the wood,
Speaking in whispers low :

Farewell, companions ! Fare thee well !
I feel this frosty air,
And see bold Winter's deathly hand
Make branches sere and bare.

And I must seek my hidden bed,
From all the world unseen,
Farewell, companions ! Fare thee well !
Good-bye, dear evergreen.

We kissed, when at the birth of Spring
I met you in the rain,
And now, why not at Autumn's close,
Have one sweet kiss again ?

They kissed, and Winter's snows came down,
And hid the fern from view,
But sister evergreen o'erhead,
Kept watch the long night through.

And while the fern reposed in sleep,
Her sister from above,
Bent down amid the wintry storms,
And blessed her with her love.

The Empty Chair.

There's an empty chair in the corner
Of the quaint old-fashioned room,
'Tis a seat with a sacred honor,

Though around it hangs a gloom ;
It's the loss of good old mother,
With her noble, dear, kind heart,
But never can any other
E'er fill her valued part.

Now the days are long and dreary,
And the nights are quiet too,
When we sit with sad eyes teary,
And think of her dear life true ;
And many an old quaint saying
Comes back with memories dear,—
Thank God, in our minds it's staying,
For it seems if mother's here.

There's an extra seat in Heaven,
In that sacred, blessed room,
By God 'tis freely given,
And there is no saddened gloom ;
There mother lives in gladness,
Hears the songs of peace and love,
Where neither grief nor sadness
Find entrance there above.

A Trident.

The day was breaking o'er the deep,
The stars had paled away to sleep,
No more to nightly vigil keep
Upon the sea ;
I went to watch the bright sun peep
On earth and me.

The beach I sought, to see it rise ;
I heard the restless ocean's sighs,
When through the grayish morning skies,
 The great orb came
In many beauteous, tinted dyes,
 On wings of flame.

The beams cast many a varied glow,
Like arrows from an archer's bow ;
And on the beach, as white as snow,
 Their brilliance sent,
Like sentinel torches, lit to show
 The warrior's tent.

Each surging wave's white, foamy crest
Was reddened as a spear-thrust breast,
And sought the strand for needed rest,
 But back to roll ;
Still on, and on, it ever pressed
 To win the goal.

I wandered to the ocean's side,
To gather sea-shells, which the tide
Had strewn and scattered far and wide
 From billows bold ;
When, to my wonder, I espied
 A Trident old.

O, Trident old ! From whence ye come ?
From what proud vessel ? State her name !
And perished she by wave or flame ?
 O pray, reveal !
Or dost there hang a cloud of shame
 Which ye conceal ?

Speak, gilded Trident ! speak ! Oh ! tell,
Hath Neptune from his chariot shell,
Lost thee amid tempestuous swell ?

Pray tell to me !
And is he dead ? and this his knell—
The moaning sea ?

The Tritons and the Nymphs are far,
They chase no more his shelly car,
But vanished like a morning star
At day's first break :
And on Olympia's height now are,
No more to wake.

Then keep thy silence, Trident old !
The tale to me is left untold,
And in my study ye can mould
Till Neptune's call ;
When ye can join his mighty fold,
And leave my wall.

New Year's Address, 1892.

Farewell ; Ninety One ! as from us you depart,
No more can your pleasures sink deep in our souls,
And cheer us anew in the depth of the heart,
Where sorrow or gladness unceasingly rolls.

Farewell ! we shall miss you and love you the same,
Like every year which fades into the past,
We'll love you as fondly as when you first came,
With dearest affection forever to last.

The throne, where you wielded the sceptre of Time.
From which you but recently went on your way,
Receives its successor, a youth in his prime,
As sparkling and bright as the frost kings at play.

The world greets his entrance with ringing of bells ;
All hail to the potentate now on the throne !
From ocean to ocean the melody swells,
Proclaiming his presence in every zone.

This greeting will last till his leadership closes,—
Sweet Spring with its verdure will join in the *fete* ;
The smile of the violets, the breath of the roses,
The tears of the dew-drops shall never abate,

Till Autumn returns with its leaves tinted red,
These harbingers faithful tell Winter's most here ;
The bloom and the scent of the flowers are dead,
They fade in the past like the weakening year.

Then hail, glad New Year ! Oh ! impart to all men
Some happiness sweet to sink deep in their souls,
And to their heart chambers bring comfort again,
Where sorrow or gladness unceasingly rolls !

The Beach.

I strolled on the beach in the evening,
O'er the sands of purest white ;
The day had vanished, and left the world
Enclosed in the robes of night.

The air was cool, and a gentle breeze
Came with softness from the sea ;
Which eased my mind from the day's hard cares,
Gave it time for reverie.

The whisp'ring billows, with crests of white
Rolled up the silvery strand,
And the sparkling gems of phosphorus,
Made the beach enchanted land.

In the blue of Heaven, slow, one by one
From the firmament so deep,
The stars came forth in their varied lights,
On the sleeping earth to peep.

The break of waters fell on my ear,
With their pure tones soft and sweet ;
Was it Nature's hall for musicales,
Where the choirs of God could meet?

I wandered back from that beach of white,
And the gentle, cooling breeze,—
It seemed I could hear as I went my way,
The song of the rolling seas.

Sonnet.

Fairest rose ! Why art thou fading ?
Why thy leaves, once tinted red,
Seem to lose their tender shading,
Is it thou wilt soon be dead ?
And thy life will ne'er be thought of,

Even by the passer-by,
Though thy matchless charnis were wrought of
God our Maker far on high !
Nature, when she needs some beauty,
Seeks that realm of peace above ;
She ascends, for 'tis her duty
E'er to find the things we love,
Such as birds and blooming flowers,—
They are made to bless Life's hours.

Thoughts of the Dead.

They come to me oft in my dreams,
Thoughts of those who have passed beyond,
So real and true, that it sometimes seems
I hear familiar lips respond.

They come to me in the stilly night,
When earth is wrapped in silence sweet,
The long-lost faces come back in sight,
Their happy looks my vision meet.

They come to me, those who have crossed
The Vale of Death to fairer shore,
No earthly storms to be tempest-tossed,—
A life of peace forevermore.

They come to me, and oft I hear
Their voices floating o'er the tide ;
I grasp in vain for loved ones dear,
They fade from view as life that's died.

I wake again—I strain my eyes
Far, far away to Heaven it seems ;
No forms I see, but glorious skies—
The dead—I see them in my dreams.

The Sailor Boy's Farewell.

I hate, dearest mother, to leave thee,
To sail o'er the rollicking main,
Far, far from the home of my childhood,
Perchance I may ne'er see again !

But, mother, the good barque is ready,
I'll bid thee a loving good-bye ;
Now do not feel sad though you'll miss me,—
Remove the kind tear from your eye !

If father was lost from the yard-arm,
In the midst of the Indian sea,
I'll take greater care my dear mother,
For God is e'er watching with me !

Now kiss little Nellie this evening,
And pat little Johnnie's fair brow,
And tell them I'll love them forever ;
Good-bye ! I must part from thee now !

And while on the gay, dancing ocean,
My prayers I will say every night ;
They rise to our God in the Heaven,
Lit on by the planets of light.

The Lost Voice.

I missed his voice one morning, from the hallway down below,
And I knew there was some trouble, for he used to warble so ;
For always at the dawning, I could hear his cheerful note
Come with the sweetest trilling from his tender little throat.

But a feeling came within my heart, which told me he was dead,
So I hastened toward the hallway, with each step a constant dread,
But the feeling that I'd lost him, was revealed in truth to me,
There he lay, my yellow songster, and his death, reality.

He had sung the previous morning with entire heart and soul,
And his rippling tones and cadences through house did clearly roll ;
He seemed so light and happy, for he never knew of care,
But now he lay enclosed in death—the silvered voice, oh, where !

Then I took his tiny body with the kindest soft caress,
And smoothed the yellow feathers, and to my lips did press
That little head so cunning, with the eyes so brown and small,
But the dear voice rich and tuneful, I could never hear at all.

Many years have drifted by me, and I often think I hear
A voice so sweet and pleasant, falling soft upon my ear ;
And at morning in my chamber, when I'm sitting all alone,
How I long to hear his singing, and the mellow silver tone !

And I wonder if he's warbling in a brighter home from me,
And if his voice is sweeter still, in harp-like melody ;
But those things I cannot answer, he is gone, I know not where,
Though I trust it's with his Maker in a heaven bright and fair.

Now the house seems still and solemn, though the cage hangs as before,
And I realize with sorrow I can never hear him more ;
For those happy songs, so cheering, will ne'er again impart
A pleasure to my ear, and a comfort to my heart.

The Tale of the Sea.

Who can tell the tale of the sea,
The secret of its mystery?
Of the forms who e'er in silence sleep,
In their tomb of rest beneath the deep,
Where the ceaseless waters rise and roll,
The grave of many a hapless soul?

Who can tell the tale of the sea?
'Tis a thought for deepest revery,
In which to muse o'er the hidden forms
Sleeping in peace, remote from storms,
Where the billows whisper in accents low,
The blessings of God, so sweet to know.

Who can tell the tale of the deep?
Only those who in silence sleep ;
For the sea will rise and roll for years,
Until blessed Judgment Day appears,
When God will come, and the ceaseless waves
Surrender the sleepers within their graves.

Then will the tale be true revealed,
And the lips of those long in silence sealed,
Will utter forth in worthy praise,

The kindness of God, His noble ways ;
Then will be told the tale of the sea,—
The secret of its mystery.

In Memoriam.

I stood by the grave of one I loved,
In the happy long ago,
And breathed the scent of the lilies fair,
With their petals white as snow ;
But where was the voice so soft and sweet,
And forever dear to me,
That stirred the depth of my boyish heart
Like an old-time melody?

I stood by the grave and sadly thought
Of her life and noble worth.
Ah ! where was a soul so pure, divine,
On this grand and beauteous earth ?
A soul that was pure as lilies white,
Which above her hallowed mound,
Bent down with a love that I knew not,
To the consecrated ground.

I went from the grave of one I loved,
From the sacred place of rest ;
But where was the voice I longed to hear,
To bring comfort to my breast ?
Alas ! 'twas in vain,—the grove was still,
Save the birds on yonder tree,
Who sang the day to its sweet repose,
While a sadness came to me.

Moses Gage Shirley.

Sweet poet of the Granite hills,
Thy verse is ever dear to me !
It sparkles bright as mountain rills,
And sings of immortality.

The tender words which leave thy pen,
Stray child-like far o'er sea and land,
And enter in the hearts of men,
To teach a moral true and grand.

Sing on, sweet singer, thy glad tune !
Aye, sing of Nature and her ways,
Make every thought a flower of June,
To bloom for God through endless days.

Farewell, Dear Home !

Farewell, dear home ! I go to roam
The mighty, heaving ocean ;
And, as I part, my manly heart
Is throbbing with emotion.

I hate to go from those I know ;
Alas ! it is my duty,
And from my wife who shares my life,
And then, my baby beauty !

I'll miss my isle and baby's smile,
The little linnet's singing ;
Yet, while away, on every day,
The love of home'll be clinging.

My aim will be, while on the sea,
To think of my returning ;
I'll bless each dawn, which brings its morn,
As for my home I'm yearning.

Then farewell, home ! I go to roam
Far from my humble dwelling ;
I'll miss the flowers which cheered my hours,
While on the billows swelling !

The violets blue will linger true,
As will the morning-glory,
Which will entwine the home of mine,
To me the dearest story.

I see no more my natal shore,
The lights no longer glimmer ;
Unhappy me ! Yes, far at sea,
My eyes feel strange and dimmer !

Door Jim.

"It seems most an age," said the miner,—
And his eyes grew moist and dim,—
"Since we buried 'neath yonder willow,
The form of poor, honest Jim.

"And it seems I can see his features,
As he lay on his humble bed,
When, at times, he seemed with the living,
At others, enrolled with the dead.

“His kind face was pale and careworn,
I knew he was suffering so ;
At length he spoke of the throne of God,
And murmured he wished to go.

“Oh ! it touched my heart as I heard him
Speak tender and sweet of home,
And the counsel wise from his mother’s lips
As he left her the world to roam !

“There he lay by the lamp in the cabin,
And I was his only friend ;
But didn’t I stick like a hero,
And comfort poor Jim’s sad end ?

“When he talked of the days of his boyhood,
And the prayers at his mother’s knee,
Where he learned of the blessings of Jesus,
Of the love which He giveth free.

“From my eyes,—well, I hate to confess it,—
The tears in a stream flowed down ;
I thought of my own dear mother,
In a far-distant country town.

“But I knew that poor Jim was dying,
And I was to watch his end ;
Which I did, thank God for my courage !
E’en in death I would be his friend.

“As the light in the hut grew fainter,
Jim’s life seemed to likewise fade ;
In my ear with exertion he whispered,
‘Old “Pard,” don’t you ever be ’fraid ;

“ ‘There’s a God in the Heaven above you,
You’ll find Him wherever you be ;
I learned of His worth in my childhood,
When I knelt at my mother’s knee.

“ ‘Now, “Pard,” see my grave is cared for,
Dig it deep by yon pine-clad hill,
Where the brook sings its song in sweet music,
Where the woods and the meadows are still.

“ ‘And, “Pard,” if there’s a thing such as Heaven,
May we meet on that other side ;’
This was all that poor Jim had uttered,
My noble companion had died.

“ ‘And oft in the silvery moonlight,
I visit poor Jim’s lone grave,
For I know that he died a true hero ;
He was faithful, was honest and brave.

“ ‘And I place on his mound sweet blue violets,
As they are so simple, like Jim,
But I’ll never, no never stop loving
The blessed, dear mem’ry of him.”

The Captain’s Story.

“ ‘Come, pass the bumper ’round, my boys,
And keep the stories going ;
Without, the night is bleak and cold,
And chilly winds are blowing !

"I have a story on my mind,—
It's strange I ne'er reveal it ;—
Yet somehow, on this wintry night,
I can no more conceal it.

"'Twas thirty long, long years ago,
Down at the old life-station,
When I was in my hardy prime,
And loved my occupation ;

"'Twas on a night, much worse than this,
The falling snow was blinding,
I knew that vessels seeking port,
A task would have in finding.

"The night was cold, the waves dashed high,
And revelled in their glory,
And on receding whence they came,
Left hissing waters hoary.

"I strolled my beat—with careful eyes
I looked for those in danger,
When, floating on the icy seas,
I spied a death-white stranger.

"My boys ! My heart came to a still ;
It seemed I knew those features,
And from the surf I grasped the form :—
One of my fellow creatures !

"It was a youth with boyish face,
Whose roses white had faded ;
The silent, marble hand of Death,
All former beauties shaded.

“I took him gently in my arms,
And brought him to our station ;
The tears had frozen to my cheeks,—
O deathly occupation !

“ I wa’nt the only one who cried,
’Cause all the boys felt badly,
And through that long and dismal night,
We watched our dead boy, sadly.

“ Towards five o’clock, a star stole forth,
And on the earth was peeping ;
It seemed o’erhead the noble boy,
Who in sweet death was sleeping.

“ And old ‘ Cap’ Jones spoke soft to me,
With tears in his fierce eyes ;
‘ Perhaps that star shines bright for God,
To find out where he lies.’

“ Those little words of old ‘ Cap’ Jones,
I always shall remember ;
They bring to mind that wicked night,
The last of that December.

“ But, boys, we never learned his name !
And now to-night he’s sleeping
In my own lot in Green Pine Grove,
Safe in his Master’s keeping.

“ He rests beside my own dear boy,
And shares his wreaths and flowers,
And gets the shade of the whispering pine,
Which o’er the good place towers.

“Then pass the bumper 'round my boys,
And keep the stories going ;
Without the night is bleak and cold,
And chilly winds are blowing !”

Told and Untold.

As I sat in my study one wild winter night,
And watched the bright glow in the old fire-place,
How the rays of the embers cast shadows of light
On the old oaken floor in their fiery chase !

In those moments of quiet, I mused on my life,
And blessed the sweet comforts it bringeth to me ;
Still I wondered and thought of my own brother's strife,
For that night he was roaming the cold, stormy sea.

Oh ! it seemed that I saw his stanch barque plunge and roll
O'er the dark, mighty mountains of wild, heaving seas ;
But I knew that our Master would harbor his soul,
And would bring him to rest on a morning of ease !

As I sat there and watched the gay, bright dancing beams,
How they rose, how they fell in their chase on the floor,
My being sank into the dreamland of dreams,
And I dreamed of my brother as never before !

In the dream I could see that his ending was near,
The craft rose and fell in the wild of the night,
But, alas ! the sad close was so perfectly clear,
My brother and all vanished deep from my sight !

I awoke from my dream, but the room I found cold,
And the beams cast no more their bright shadows about.
Ah ! the dream had a tale, though it left one untold,
My brother was dead and the fire was out !

A Piece of Driftwood.

Whence did'st thou come, thou worthless wood,
Thou victim of the sea ?
Why not gain speech, thou grave mute thing,
And tell the tale to me ?

For years thou'st tossed o'er rolling seas,
And battled with the tides ;
The seaweed clings with Time's strong grasp,
Upon thy battered sides.

Why stay'st thou dumb ? Why seek this beach ?
Art thou in quest of grave,
To rest upon the sands of white,
Free from the rolling wave ?

O worthless wreck ! why not reveal
That lost day of thy fate ?
Pray tell the furies of the storm !
Why not the tidings state ?

Can'st thou not tell of helpless souls
That sleep beneath the sea,
That sank with anguish from your sides
Into eternity ?

* * * *

It speaketh not, upon the sands
It lies to rot away ;
To moulder through the age of time,
With not a word to say.

The Cenotaph.

I heard no sound, save whispering of the trees
In that green lot upon the mountain side ;
A quiet reigned, the world seemed still at ease,—
I spoke, but ne'er a voice replied.

Within the lot I saw a headstone white ;
I read the words inscribed upon its face ;
This noble youth a mother's fond delight,
He sleeps—the battle-field his resting place.

There was no mound—no flowers to deck the sod,
To bless his memory, the sacrifice he taught ;
His form afar, within the care of God,
By His kind grace to never be forgot.

I learned the tale—by chance a passer-by
Saw how intent I viewed the lonely stone ;
'Twas told to me, this young man brave did die,
He saved a life, though sacrificed his own.

I went my way, true-pictured in my mind,
The noble dead, the hero's saddened death ;
Soft through the branches sighed the gentle wind,
Sweet from the vale came Nature's perfumed breath.

The Sailor's Story.

“ It was on an August evening,
In the port of Tripoli,
Where our ship had long been waiting,
For her chance to put to sea.
Overhead the stars were shining,
And the night was mild and clear,
When across the peaceful waters,
Fell this song upon my ear :
‘ Rock of Ages, cleft for me !
Let me hide myself in thee.’

“ How I listened to those voices
Coming from the other side,
For they told to me the story
Of the Savior crucified ;
And my mind went back to mother,
When she sang the same dear strain ;
But her soul is now in heaven,
And to me wont sing again :
‘ Rock of Ages, cleft for me !
Let me hide myself in thee.’

“ Out on deck I stood that evening,
Listening to the sweet old tune ;
When above the distant waters,
Rose the lovely silvered moon ;
But its beauty had no lik'ning
To the voices soft and clear,
As upon the Afric breezes,
Fell these words upon my ear :
‘ In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling.’

“ From that night I thought of Heaven,
And the song at Tripoli ;
And the spirit of its music,
Ever lives and dwells with me.
For some day I'll meet with mother,
On a sacred, peaceful shore,
Where our voices sweet together,
Will repeat the dear words o'er :
' Rock of Ages, cleft for me !
Let me hide myself in thee.' ”

II Wonder How He Saw the World.

I wonder how he saw the world
With his poor, vacant, fading eye ;
To me it seemed a pitying sight,
As every morn I passed him by.

I wonder if he saw and loved
The beauty of the violets blue,
Which in a window o'er the way,
In unobtrusive sweetness grew.

His eyes oft wandered o'er the throng
Of people passing on their way ;
Their look one time met square with mine,
It lingers till the present day.

So how can I but take my pen
And weave a tribute kind to him ?
My heart is sore with aching pain,
My eyes to-night feel strangely dim.

Poor man ! God has a love for thee
Though to thy mind the world is aught,
'Tis hard to lose Life's glorious things,
But God gives thee a tender thought.

Some day a voice will bid thee come,
To enter in a holier sphere ;
And what was lost upon this earth,
In heaven will be doubly dear.

Lines to a Dead Bird.

Innocent bird ! I well can pity thee,
Although thy death is such a simple thing,
Small as it is, sweet thoughts come back to me,
As I think how with rapture thou did'st sing !

'Twas yesterday you perched upon my sill,
And chirped away with light and happy heart,
But now the yard seems strange it is so still,
And you from me by cruel death depart !

Innocent bird ! God knows thy saddened end,
For ev'ry creature hath he given name,
And as to man, he is thy loyal friend,
E'en thou art dead, he loves thee still the same.

Sleep—sleep in peace, my poor, poor, little bird !
How I shall miss thy early morning song,
Life will be still, my heart shall ne'er be stirred,
But by thy memory which will linger long.

The Sea of Life.

Far in the distance, on the star-kissed sea,
Rearing its head amid the darkened night,
The lighthouse shone in brilliancy of light,
To guide the sailor to a peaceful lea.
And as I watched it burn, there came to me
Thoughts, which are hallowed by my memory ;
For in my mind, I saw the sea of Life,
Its storms, its peace, its quiet, and its roar,
But far as I could gaze, there was no shore
To anchor from the tumult and the strife.

There flashed a light upon that sea so wide
Constantly shining through each day and night,
Helping all men to move in channels right,
Under the leadership of Christ our Guide.
Who shows the blessed pathway o'er the tide,
Where parted loved ones in sweet rest abide.
O sea of Life ! How many poor wrecked souls
Are tossing helpless on thy ceaseless waves,
Soon to be swallowed in forgotten graves,
Where undercurrent, and a wild sea rolls.

'Tis Far More Sweet.

'Tis far more sweet to be a child,
And live a simple, happy way,
Among the woodlands bold and wild,
Where pleasant sunbeams laugh and play,
Than mighty king upon a throne,
Where wickedness and torment reign,

Whose heart is selfish, all his own,
And knoweth not the world of pain.

'Tis far more sweet to love the birds,
That warble 'round the cottage door,
Than listen to the empty words
Which cross our pathway o'er and o'er ;
For in the birds that chirp their tune,
Contentment lies in every breast,
Their living is continuous June,
Their hearts a noble place of rest.

'Tis far more sweet to love the flowers,
The petalled messengers of God,
That deck the meadows and the bowers
Or bloom upon the greeny sward ;
In their pure lives, an innocence
Reveals itself in sweet perfume,
They breathe to men the recompense
That waits for them beyond the tomb.



APPENDIX.



THE SHIP SOOLOO.—The first ship Sooloo of Salem, was wrecked May 14, 1855, off the coast of Sumatra, but later, in 1860, another vessel of the same name was built, and for many years figured conspicuously in the Manilla trade. Recently, through age, she has been transformed into a coal barge, and is conveying coal along the coast. As I saw her one summer morning in the year of eighteen hundred ninety-one, being towed up Salem harbor, the thought arose within my mind as to the sad contrast of her mission now, and that of her palmy days, when proud and stately

“She ploughed all oceans,
Spreading Salem’s name abroad,
But those days of joy are over,
She has reaped her great reward,”

The poem was printed in the Salem Register, June 22, 1891.

BIRTHDAY POEM.—This poem was read at the fifty-second birthday reception of Mr. Charles Cummings of Ipswich, one of the leading advocates of temperance and Christian work in that town.

THE STORM.—Upon perusing the columns of the Boston Journal, I came across a poem written by a journalistic friend. The thoughts in the poem impressed me very deeply, thus moving me to write in a similar strain. For the benefit of my friends, and for my esteem of the author, the Journal poem is printed below.

The Storm.

The swift choristers of the sky,
Herald the forces black and vast,
And charging lines move quickly on,
Warning of gloom to overcast.

Now bird and beast a shelter seek,
 As the rain-drops begin to fall;
 The darksome night shuts in around,
 And gath'ring fear creeps over all.
 Anon the storm through valley sweeps,
 And stately pines now frowning lift
 Their branches to the murky sky,
 As through the sky the lightnings rift.
 Oh! The day of dread, and pain, and loss!
 Some recompense you yet may bring;
 For brighter still the sun will shine,
 And woodland birds the sweeter sing,
 When Aurora tints the eastern scene,
 And the fresh diamond-spangled green,
 Tells us the tempest's past and gone,
 And Phœbus reigns in silver sheen.

—C. E. T.

THE KING'S DAUGHTERS.—Suggested by a thought in the address of Mrs Margaret Bottome, International President of the King's Daughters, delivered at M. E. Church, Salem, Nov. 11, 1891.

THOUGHTS UPON FINDING A TRIDENT.—The trident referred to in this poem, presumably was a part of a figure-head of Neptune washed ashore from some ill-fated ship.

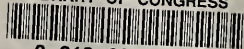
I WONDER HOW HE SAW THE WORLD.—A poor weak-minded man who sells shoe-strings on the street in Boston.

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